Numb. CLXII.

The GUARDIAN.

Proprium hoc esse prudentiæ, conciliare sibi animos hominum & ad usus suos adjungere. Cicer.

Wednesday, September 16, 1713.

I Was the other Day in Company at my Lady *Lizard*'s, when there came in among us their Cousin *Tom*, who is one of those Country Squires that set up for plain honest Gentlemen who speak their Minds. *Tom* is in short a lively impudent Clown, and has Wit enough to have made him a pleasant Companion, had it been polished and rectified by good Manners. *Tom* had not been a Quarter of an Hour with us, before he set every one in the Company a Blushing, by some blunt Question, or unlucky Observation. He asked the *Sparkler* if her Wit had yet got her a Husband; and told her eldest Sister she looked a little Wan under the Eyes, and that it was time for her to look about her, if she did not design to lead Apes in the other World. The good Lady *Lizard*, who suffers more than her Daughters on such an occasion, desired her Cosin *Thomas* with a Smile, not to be so severe on his Relations; to which the Booby replied, with a rude Country Laugh, if I be not mistaken Aunt, you were a Mother at Fifteen, and why do you expect that your Daughters should be Maids till Five and twenty? I endeavoured to divert the Discourse, when without taking Notice of what I said, Mr. *Ironside*, says he, you fill my Cousins Heads with your fine Notions as you call them, can you teach them to make a Pudding? I must confess he put me out of Countenance with his Rustick Raillery, so that I made some Excuse, and left the Room.

This Fellow's Behaviour made me reflect on the Usefulness of Complaisance, to make all Conversation agreeable. This, tho' in itself it be scarce reckoned in the number of Moral Virtues, is that which gives a Lustre to every Talent a Man can be possest of. It was *Plato*'s Advice to an unpolish'd Writer, that he should Sacrifice to the Graces. In the same manner I would advise every Man of Learning, who would not appear in the World a mere Scholar, or Philosopher, to make himself Master of the Social Virtue which I have here mentioned.

Complaisance renders a Superior amiable, an Equal agreeable, and an Inferior acceptable. It smooths Distinction, sweetens Conversation, and makes every one in the Company pleased with himself. It produces Good-nature and mutual Benevolence, encourages the Timorous, soothes the Turbulent, humanises the Fierce, and distinguishes a Society of Civilised Persons from a Confusion of Savages. In a word, Complaisance is a Virtue that blends all Orders of Men together in a Friendly Intercourse of Words and Actions, and is suited to that Equality in Human Nature which every one ought to consider, so far as is consistent with the Order and OEconomy of the World.

If we could look into the secret Anguish and Affliction of every Man's Heart, we should often find, that more of it arises from little imaginary Distresses, such

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ſuch as Checks, Frowns, Contradictions, Expreſſions of Contempt, and (what *Shakeſpear* reckons among other Evils under the Sun,)

——— The poor Man's Contumely,
The Inſolence of Office, and the Spurns
That patient Merit of the unworthy takes,

than from the more real Pains and Calamities of Life. The only Method to remove theſe imaginary Diſtreſſes as much as poſſible out of Human Life, wou'd be the Univerſal Practice of ſuch an ingenuous Complaiſance as I have been here deſcribing, which, as it is a Virtue, may be defined to be *a conſtant Endeavour to pleaſe thoſe whom we converſe with, ſo far as we may do it Innocently.* I ſhall here add, that I know nothing ſo effectual to raiſe a Man's Fortune as Complaiſance. which recommends more to the Favour of the Great, than Wit, Knowledge, or any other Talent whatſoever. I find this Conſideration very prettily illuſtrated by a little wild *Arabian* Tale, which I ſhall here abridge, for the ſake of my Reader, after having again warned him, that I do not recommend to him ſuch an impertinent or vicious Complaiſance as is not conſiſtent with Honour and Integrity.

'*Schacabac* being reduced to great Poverty, and 'having eat nothing for two Days together, made 'a Viſit to a noble *Barmecide* in *Perſia*, who was 'very hoſpitable, but withal a great Humouriſt. 'The *Barmecide* was ſitting at his Table that ſeem'ed ready covered for an Entertainment. Upon 'hearing *Schacabac*'s Complaint, he deſired him to 'ſit down and fall on. He then gave him an empty 'Plate, and aſked him how he liked his Rice-Soup. '*Schacabac*, who was a Man of Wit, and reſolved 'to comply with the *Barmecide* in all his Humours, 'told him 'twas admirable, and, at the ſame time, 'in Imitation of the other, lifted up the empty 'Spoon to his Mouth with great Pleaſure. The '*Barmecide* then aſked him, if he ever ſaw whiter 'Bread? *Schacabac* who ſaw neither Bread nor 'Meat, If I did not like it, you may be ſure, ſays he, 'I ſhould not eat ſo heartily of it. You oblige 'me mightily, reply'd the *Barmecide*, pray let me 'help you to this Leg of a Gooſe. *Schacabac* reach'ed out his Plate. and received nothing on it with 'great Chearfulneſs. As he was eating very heartily 'on this imaginary Gooſe, and crying up the Sauce 'to the Skies, the *Barmecide* deſired him to keep a 'Corner of his Stomach for a roaſted Lamb, fed 'with Piſtacho-Nuts, and after having call'd 'for it, as tho' it had really been ſerved up, Here 'is a Diſh, ſays he, that you will ſee at no Body's 'Table but my own. *Schacabac* was wonderfully 'delighted with the Taſte of of it, which is like 'nothing, ſays he, I ever eat before. Several 'other nice Diſhes were ſerved up in Idea, 'which both of them commended and feaſted on 'after the ſame manner. This was followed by an 'inviſible *Diſſert*, no part of which delighted '*Schacabac* ſo much as a certain Lozenge, which 'the *Barmecide* told him was a Sweet-meat of his 'own Invention. *Schacabac* at length, being cour'teouſly reproached by the *Barmecide*, that he had 'no Stomach, and that he eat nothing, and, at the 'ſame time, being tired with moving his Jaws up 'and down to no Purpoſe, deſired to be excuſed, 'for that really he was ſo full he could not eat a 'Bit more. Come then, ſays the *Barmecide*, the 'Cloth ſhall be removed, and you ſhall taſte of my 'Wines, which I may ſay, without Vanity, are 'the beſt in *Perſia*. He then *filled* both their Glaſ'ſes out of an empty Decanter. *Schacabac* would 'have excuſed himſelf from drinking ſo much at 'once, becauſe he ſaid he was a little Quarrelſome 'in his Liquor; however being preſt to it, he pre'tended to take it off, having before-hand praiſed 'the Colour, and afterwards the Flavour. Being 'ply'd with two or three other imaginary Bumpers 'of different Wines, equally delicious, and a little 'vexed with this fantaſtick Treat, he pretended to 'grow fluſtred, and gave the *Barmecide* a good Box 'on the Ear, but immediately recovering himſelf, 'Sir, ſays he, I beg ten thouſand Pardons, but I 'told you before, that it was my Misfortune to be 'Quarrelſome in my Drink. The *Barmecide* could 'not but ſmile at the Humour of his Gueſt, and in'ſtead of being angry at him, I find, ſays he, thou 'art a complaiſant Fellow, and deſerveſt to be en'tertained in my Houſe. Since thou canſt acco'modate thy ſelf to my Humour, we will now 'eat together in good Earneſt. Upon which, cal'ling for his Supper, the Rice-Soup, the Gooſe, 'the Piſtacho-Lamb, the ſeveral other nice Diſhes, 'with the *Diſſert*, the Lozenges, and all the Varie'ty of *Perſian* Wines, were ſerved up ſucceſſively, 'one after another; and *Schacabac* was feaſted 'in Reality, with thoſe very things which he had 'before been entertained with in Imagination.

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